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[The City Greek]

An additional resource of the city Greek after the fall of the Byzantine Empire was the respect which other peoples paid to Greek cultural traditions. The city Greek could rest at times on the laurels of his ancestors, or he could command a situation by assuming superiority based on the glory of his past. Furthermore, when days looked darkest, from late in the eighteenth century on down, he could count on the support of classic-minded benefactors of the Western world. There remained also the implication of the term *barbarian* for the non-Greek; this did not die out with ancient Greece but continued to apply to other Balkan Christian groups which the city Greek assiduously tried to Hellenize. The city was dominant here, too, for this Hellenization proceeded outward from the city. The contact point was usually the Greek priest, with his loyalty to the urban Byzantine tradition, in a Slavic, Vlach, or Albanian village before the rise of national churches in the Balkans during the last century.[5]

This, then, is the proud and rich tradition of the contemporary city Greek — a tradition kept alive by the schools, the church, and by the admiration of many non-Greek scholars seeking to trace the origin of Western democracy to its pristine source in the pre-Christian Greek city-state.

Also helping to keep the tradition alive are the few leisured families, some of whom have highly placed relatives scattered throughout the continent of Europe, as well as the growing intelligentsia and the merchants for whom the city is a natural habitat. Even the urban laborer, whether a skilled worker in a textile plant or an unskilled hod carrier on a construction project, has many of the same traits as the members of the middle and upper classes: in his cafés and *tavernas*, the worker reveals the same zest for life as well as some of the same preoccupations with his daily lot. Yet members of the new intelligentsia, Athenian politicians, and businessmen still have many relatives in the provinces with whom they are in frequent contact and to whom city ways are steadily spreading.

The city Greek's supreme self-confidence, arising out of these traditions of power and glory, is shown in almost any discussion overheard at the cafés where the Greek urbanite meets his friends to argue about anything and everything.[6] His gestures are as eloquent as his words, as Robert P. T. Coffin said so well in his poem, "Greek Hands Are the Greek":

> Greek hands are tongues,
> They are tails of dogs;
> They are also Plato's
> Dialogues.[7]

Completely sure that his ideas on public questions are as sound as those of any cabinet minister or newspaper editor, the city Greek takes great pleasure in expounding these ideas.[8] An incident of half a century ago, at the time of the Russo-Japanese War, is still told with amusement by Athe-

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[The City Greek]

369 829 195 nians. According to the story, a man reading his newspaper at a café table was studying the battle plans and maps of the Russian command. The more he studied the newspaper details of the Russian army lines, the more excited he became, until he finally called out a warning to the Russian general half a world away in these classic words, "More to the right, Koropotkin! More to the right!" This phrase is repeated with a smile by one Athenian to another when he wants to imply that the other is passing judgment on something a little — but only a little — out of his field of competence. As 369 829 a matter of fact, a multitude of anecdotes told by city Greeks about themselves swarm into memory. One way of gaining an insight into the Greek mind is to listen to these stories.

The Greek shows pride in his intellectual curiosity by relating the tale of the Greek walking along a Paris street with a French friend. The Greek in the excitement of a discussion of nationality traits boasted that he could identify any Greek who came down the street. To the Frenchman this seemed impossible in such a cosmopolitan city as Paris.

"Let us wait here for a few minutes and I will find the Greeks for you," said the Athenian, who thereupon began to twist his cane into a nearby wall as though he were boring a hole. Many people passed by without paying any attention, when all of a sudden one man stopped to observe this strange behavior. He looked at the cane, the small hole, and at the man turning the cane as though trying to figure out the reason for the procedure. The Greek with the cane asked, "Are you Greek?" "Yes, I am," said the inquisitive passerby. "What are you doing with that cane?" The performance with the cane was repeated and after an interval a second man — of course, another Greek — stopped to observe. This was enough to convince the Frenchman of his Greek friend's ability to discover his fellow countrymen by tickling their curiosity.

This intellectual curiosity has its other side, too. One Greek social worker with an objective view of herself and her associates said, "When we Greeks face a crucial problem in social welfare or elsewhere, we are inclined to examine it from all sides. We look at it from so many points of view that we finally convince ourselves that it is not a very serious problem and practically explain it away, with the result that we do not feel the need to take any action about it at all."

369 ●521 [275] [829] It must be obvious by now that city Greeks are never dull. Conversations with them do not merely flow; they roar along. They always have some principles to defend, some causes or organizations to promote, or some absorbing hobbies to share. The mark of the true urbanite, as previously implied, is the regular visit to a favorite café, the modern version of the ancient agora, to transact business or to discuss with friends every conceivable facet of the happenings of the past twenty-four hours, not only in his own social group but in the world at large. It is only fair to point out that a few of the

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[The City Greek]

Athenians know more about the French Riviera than the rural regions of their own country, and others of them live so entirely in an urban world that they take the Greek villager for granted, which in many ways is worse than ignoring him.[9] Yet such city Greeks, once this attitude is pointed out to them, are the first to admit their ignorance and to start another discussion on the novel subject of the Greek village, from which so many of them derive.

But there are somber shades as well to the sparkle and dash of Greek wit. To persuade many of the Greek officials to move from talk to action would have its difficulties and would prove particularly frustrating to an American or Britisher who had a special job to complete in a given period of time. It is also probably true that, given the present state of the Greek economy, almost any official is more interested in holding his job than in pressing toward real accomplishment if this might antagonize those above or below him in the bureaucratic hierarchy. Some of these officials, native sons of the village and not yet sure of themselves in the urban environment, spend disproportionate amounts of time in mending their political fences or in sitting on them, a pose easy for many Greeks to assume while rationalizing their problems away.

The qualities of city Greeks which have been mentioned here — self-confidence, intellectual curiosity, philosophizing a problem away, preoccupation with maintaining and improving one's position, and an awareness of a great cultural tradition — are endearing to some while irritating to others.[10] The urban Greeks who seem best to embody the heritage from the past and to approach with sincerity their problems of today are those who have taken time to know both the city and village Greece of the 1960's. Sharing the difficulties faced by their neighbors in the city, they also understand the grave readjustments occurring in the countryside.

The Island and Seafaring Greeks

The tradition of the city, ancient but still tremendously significant today, has mingled with the equally ancient traditions of the sea in the formation of modern Greece. Odysseus still lives in the Aegean and Ionian Islands today, not only in the resourcefulness with which he approached his problems but in the extent of his voyages. The seafarers are primarily the islanders, and Greece has many islands.[11] Although the sea, never more than eighty-odd miles distant from any point in Greece, has an indirect influence on the horizons of all Greeks, it is the direct source of livelihood to many islanders. Whether as fishermen or merchant seamen, they must study its moods in the same way that the city merchant studies the market or the peasant the condition of the soil. The seamen become so cosmopolitan through their voyages that they feel at home in many port towns with people speaking many languages. This at-homeness in the world extends to

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[The Island and Seafaring Greeks]

the warm morning sunshine, to watch the sailors of the numerous passenger and cargo ships work aboard ship and then relax in the tiny sea-front cafés, and to talk with the families of those whose most energetic sons are away at sea, is an introduction to a world incomprehensible to many peasants in Central and Northern Greece and strange to the inland American. For me, the best hours of all were those spent along the quay of a busy port with a retired sea captain, telling the tales of his misadventures — a 1950 version of the trials of Odysseus. All of these seafarers, fishermen, and merchant seamen, crews and captains and their island-anchored families, are a part of the rainbow in the rock. Yet they, along with the city Greeks, so similar in vitality but different in their life, make up only half of the people of Greece. The other half are rural. It is with this largest single group that we shall concern ourselves.

The Greek Villager

Being rural in Greece means living in a village, which is usually a picturesque collection of houses, lanes, gardens, orchards, vineyards, and fields. It also means that one is a peasant, since the Greek terms *choriates, chorikos,* derived from the word *choria* (village), are the closest approximations of *peasant* in the Greek language. But any Westerner, in seeking to understand the rural Greek, needs to divest himself of many false notions about the nature of a peasantry, be these on the romantic side of overidealization or on the derogatory plane of considering them mere bearers of burdens and dull plodders through life.[18]

In not all countries do peasants always live in villages, but they do in Greece. Therefore, in examining social life throughout the Greek mainland, away from the cities, we can use *villager, peasant,* and *rural population* interchangeably, feeling that if we understand Greek village life, we also shall have gained a point of comparison for the study of peasantries in other countries.

The importance of the small village in Greek life can best be shown by a few figures taken from the 1951 census. For instance, 44.6 percent — or almost half of the Greek people — lived in 5,473 communes, or local political units, of less than 2,000 inhabitants. At the other extreme was Athens, whose population included 18 percent of the nation's total; by 1961 it had reached 22 percent. Since 1940 there has been a definite drift toward Athens and the twenty other towns which in 1940 had a population of over 20,000. Despite this urban trend, one must still recognize that the small village is an imposing aspect of Greek life which deserves far more attention than it has received in the past.

Although rural people today are increasingly drawn to the city, the peasant in years past has been a man of the land, usually suspicious of city ways. And herein lies a question: are these millions of peasants, following a daily

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horsefly, he will put it in his wallet for good luck. Or if he is returning from the field and sees two crows quarreling while flying high over a house, he will be reminded of the belief that either the husband or the wife in that house will die soon. If he sees a crow pass in front of him from right to left, he will consider it a good omen; but if from left to right, he will expect bad luck. Should a rabbit or snake be in the path ahead, the peasant knows he must walk on in a straight line; should the road turn to the right or left, then the individual had better return home and start the journey the following day.

A spider walking on you will bring good luck, but if you come upon two snakes fighting and eating each other, a close relation of yours will die. Should you be a shepherd in the Vardousia Mountains of Central Greece, you would probably believe that the wild goats which graze in herds are guarded by the devil and that is why one can hear them make a whistling noise. Furthermore, these wild goats have the same notches cut in their ears as the tame ones kept by the shepherds, which to these mountaineers is proof positive that the devil must be the one who puts the markings there.

Seeing some insect or animal may bring to mind a story learned when a child. The bee, for instance, was once as white as cotton. When Adam and Eve met the devil in the Garden of Eden, it was the bee that saw them first and flew immediately to tell God the news. The devil, who was then holding a burning torch in his hand, ran and tried to catch the bee to keep her from her mission. He could not reach her, but as she was nearing God the devil from afar threw the flaming torch at her. The fire singed her so that she became black. God, who saw all of this, ordered the human beings to burn in the churches only the candles made from beeswax since the bee had proven to be the purest creature of all. I am often asked if these folk beliefs (cited here and in later sections of this book) are widely held or are only the relic in the mind of some aged person. It is safe to say that almost all of them are very much alive at the conversational level. People are aware of them, talk about them. Obviously, many act on them, while others do not. But they are a part of the general atmosphere, as is the belief common in America that a person should not walk under a ladder.

Such beliefs, stories, and personal experiences with many kinds of plants and animals reinforce the rural Greek's sense of intimacy with nature, which develops because of his constant exposure to the elements in the course of his daily life. The Greek peasant, like many farmers elsewhere, moves through a living landscape with which he communicates.

The same holds true for his view of the cosmos and the movement of the heavenly bodies.[7] One of the simplest and clearest descriptions of the latter is taken from an account of a village prepared by a singing master in

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is going on in the world." "A few of us get small cooking stoves and others electric irons." Some also add, with a twinkle in their eyes, that since they can see after dark they do not have to go to bed so early and that the birth rate will probably drop.

Where there is no electricity there may be radio sets run by batteries. In one mountain village we found that five of the eight coffeehouses had battery receiving sets which they always turned on to the newscasts. "Why," we wanted to know, "are you villagers so interested in newscasts?" "Oh, we like to hear farm prices over the radio, but most of all we like news about what is going on in foreign countries because that is what enlightens us." In some of the most out-of-the-way villages we found receiving sets run by gas motors supplied by the United States Mission. Thus the air waves are reaching the village plateia and the villagers' sense of isolation gives way to a growing demand for more of the benefits enjoyed outside the village.

The water supply in the village is quickly identified by the procession of people to and from the springs, artesian well, or street faucets. A local gendarme in his trim gray uniform, who joins our group, and a field guard on his way to leave the rifle slung over his shoulder at the community-council office are expressions of services from the national or local government, as is the mailman who comes from the next largest center once a day, or perhaps three times a week.

Our observations of the people, public buildings, and available utilities are constantly interrupted by the liveliness of the eager conversation around the café table. Although the American visitor is not directly engaged, the topics sound so interesting and so close to the facts he is trying to collect that he cannot remain entirely aloof. For instance, the young officer in charge of some people recently resettled in the Greek-Albanian border area under his control says that the peasants are complaining because their land allotment is too small and the soil too sandy, so they go into the forbidden no-man's-land to cultivate even if they do place their lives in jeopardy; a man who prides himself on knowing local history affects a learned air when he tells the history of the local church, built on the site of an ancient pagan shrine; a child, bolder than the rest, comes up to ask the woman interpreter, who is wearing slacks, whether she is a man or a woman.

Again, in a low voice, a local official inquires politely: "Who is this American professor? What is he doing in our village?" When he is told that the professor is interested in understanding the Greek people, and in telling Americans about them, he finds it hard to believe. "You mean," someone asks, "that he has come all the way from America to visit our village? Please tell the professor that we are greatly honored." One man adds, "I've lived here sixty-seven years and during none of that time has a Greek professor ever come to visit us." A woman related to the coffee-

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public facilities can also be provided where the people are concentrated in villages.

Students of village life, in addition to deciding why settlements are found where they are, also try to describe the different shapes which the settlements assume. In Greece one finds a great many compact (nucleated) villages in which the lanes move in all directions from the central square and houses are built along these lanes. Another type, found, for instance, in the northern Peloponnesos between Corinth and Patras, is the line village which extends like a ribbon along some main highway and has little depth in either direction. Sometimes these line villages also follow a narrow river valley. In any event, the lay of the land contributes to the shape of the settlement, as well as to its aesthetic effect upon the passerby.

The Importance of Roads

One need not sit in the village square or around a fire in the main room of a peasant's house very long before learning that roads are important topics of conversation.[7] They loom large in the peasant's consciousness, revealing a growing desire on the part of the villagers for a rapid link with the outside. Their isolated world is breaking down, much to their joy, and they are feeling more and more a part of the body politic of Greece.

Today one can travel to most of the major towns of Greece on relatively narrow but high-speed, black-topped roads. Every few miles an all-weather gravel road leads off from these highways to serve a number of villages through which it winds; it also serves an even greater number connected with it by a road passable only in good weather or by a donkey track over which no motor vehicle can travel. Many familiar with the contribution of the American aid program to Greece maintain that, aside from the turning of the tide against the Communist guerrillas, the most lasting reminder of American help will be the greatly expanded road system. In Northern Greece, in particular, military roads are being constructed through areas which formerly were hours away from any contact with trucks or buses; and in all parts of Greece villagers through the "personal labor" program are building roads to connect their communities with some good highway not too far away.

Sensing the stress placed upon roads, we began to talk to people about the difference that a new road made to the villages it reached. Everywhere the testimony was much the same. One nomarch (or prefect) gave this explanation: "With a new road the state functions can be more immediately brought to the people. The new agricultural extension program can be taken to a village on a road and people can go to the center to talk to the officials. But there are more gradual changes as well: the peasant wants to improve his home because his wider travel helps him see a better life; he wants to keep his home cleaner."

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Thessaly

423 178 past and discontent with the present was a compensation for their feeling of inferiority to the other villagers about them. Their slowness to adopt anything new showed up in small ways. Noting that the flies were bad at the café, I asked them what they thought of DDT. "Oh, that's wonderful," [177 825] they said. "The English brought in DDT just at the end of the war and for two years we weren't bothered with flies at all. But now the flies are back and I guess we'll have to put up with them." Flies, of course, were only a minor irritation. They complained of many greater difficulties.

423 "We are becoming overpopulated. We are increasing. A person with seven children can't feed them properly on fifteen acres. If we tried to stop children from coming someone would say that we were being anti-religious."

And then another added, "If we only get our pasture land, we will be content."

"Are you sure of that?" someone asked. "If you had one hundred fifty acres instead of fifteen, wouldn't you still think that too little? Isn't that human nature?"

The director, perhaps to even up the score of what was a trying experience for him, sent a parting shot which made the men grin sheepishly: "Really, now, this talk of your getting the pasture land is a little beside the [685] point. Actually, you are already profiting from this land, since — contrary to the law — you are now letting your animals pasture there during the night in the belief that nobody knows what you are doing. But let us hope that soon the land will be yours and you won't have to try to be so clever." [521] The frank, rather acrid discussion ended, as most Greek café arguments do, with at least the appearance of good humor.

423 241 Thomai in Thessaly pointed up one aspect of land reform — land redistribution. However, no matter how disturbed the Thomai peasant became about it, the crucial aspect of land reform in Greece today is not redistribution. The government has scraped bottom in its search for more land for the peasants. What is more desperately needed, from the standpoint of efficient farm management, is the concentration of an owner's scattered strips into one compact holding which can be worked as a unit.[14] One traditional way of decreasing the disadvantages of the divided holdings is the *domka* system of Thessaly, Macedonia, and Thrace under which the [311] entire area of the community is divided into three sections.[15] In any given year all of the land owned by the various families of the community in one section is planted with the predominant crop, a second section lies fallow for a year, and the third section is kept fallow for a longer period and is used for pasture. Obviously the abandonment of the fallow part of the rotation cycle and the increasing use of cover crops or fertilized commercial crops makes the domka system outmoded.

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So. Greece

[Harvesting Olives]

245 [464] not supporting them. But for the unmarried this is a rare opportunity to earn some money for the family budget, or even more important, to get money for the dowry that each would-be bride must accumulate.

245 461 [264] To follow the workers through their daily round of labor, one gets up long before sunrise and walks with them in the darkness from their village homes to the grove. Each girl carried a little bundle of food with her to last her through the day. Later repasts showed that the bundles contained a variety of foods, such as fried *marida* (small fish), cheese, bread, an onion, or brined olives. A very few had meat balls, but only once a week. A donkey brayed as it heard the people going by; the air was chilly and bracing, and birds were beginning to wake up in a nervous twitter. Once at the grove, the mild-mannered foreman assigned the girls to their tasks for the day. They put their bundles down in a place where inquisitive dogs would not molest them and set off in twos either to gather the olives that had fallen during the night or else to pick them from the tree. When they could reach no higher in "cleaning the tree," as they called it, they took long-handled rakes and "combed" the tree.

[412] "Why do you use rakes instead of the reeds such as people in other villages use? Aren't the reeds much lighter?" The foreman explained that those who used reeds really beat down the olives, and in doing so broke many more twigs than those who used the rakes. This would endanger the next year's crop, since the new olives would grow on the sprig which extended beyond the olives formed for harvesting this year.

The girls all wore bags around their waists which they filled and left for the men to collect that day. From time to time, as the young men came to [832] collect the sacks, they would banter good-naturedly with the girls. One could trace the path of the boys by hearing the interruption they caused in the girls' singing and the self-conscious giggles that took the place of the songs. Under many of the trees burlap cloth placed there facilitated the gathering and kept the olives which fell from getting dusty and lowering the quality of the oil.

About 9:30 the whistle from the olive mill announced that time had come [264] for a break. During this half-hour rest period, the harvesters ate a small snack from their bundles, usually staying together in partners as they had [466] been assigned. Apparently the foreman knew the girls very well, since he was able to assign a slow picker to work with a fast picker; he also took into account the way the girls got along with each other, but gave efficiency in [264] picking the first consideration. After another two hours of work, between ten o'clock and noon, the hour-long lunch period began. At this time, each [521] girl gathered with her closest friends in intimate groups to exchange gossip about family affairs, to tell about their dreams, or to express an opinion about some eligible bachelor in the village.

Lunch out of the way, the original work partners got busy again. Fast

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hands moved busily to fill more sacks as the afternoon wore on. At five o'clock, when it was getting chilly once more with the setting of the sun, the girls would collect their brightly colored jackets and bundles from a tree where they hung and move down toward the mill to wait for next day's instructions and, incidentally, to have a further chat with friends.

"How many sacks did you fill today?"

"Oh, Maria and I picked 70 okas," which we learned was a fair average for medium-sized olives for two pickers.

"Yes, you picked larger olives today but we had to pick the small ones. That's why we got only 40 okas."

After hearing about the work for the following day the girls formed in groups and headed back home for a well-earned rest. This daily round lasts well into January in Southern Greece, with February being the end of the harvest farther north.

When the day's harvesting is done, the focus of attention shifts to the mill. Somewhat against their will, the men who have been working in the warm air inside are asked to go out and gather the sacks the girls have left under the trees. These are tied onto pack animals and brought into the mill, each sack having been identified by the girl filling it as to whether its olives were from the tree or from the ground.

The peasants, whose womenfolk have been harvesting their own trees during the day, bring their olives to the mill, weigh them in, empty the bags into the place allotted each person, and then hang around for a chat with the mill workers and with the other peasants who show up. Here the day's news is exchanged to the accompaniment of barking dogs, the noisy impatience of donkeys and horses, and the cries of a small child perched precariously on a wooden saddle which formerly had been carrying the bags of olives. If the men in the mill have stopped for their evening meal, the peasant may have a drink with them. Eventually he will ask: "When do you think you'll get to my batch of olives?"

"About one o'clock tomorrow, for we have some real ripe olives that Panagiotes just brought in which must be pressed before they turn rancid. Hey, Panagiotes, why didn't you bring these olives two days ago? They are already beginning to turn." In reply to the foreman, now running the mill instead of directing the work of the girls, Panagiotes gives some lame excuse about having to use his donkey to do some other kind of work, but agrees to be more careful in the days ahead.

The peasant who learns that his olives will have been pressed by one o'clock on the next day will probably arrive about noon and wait; he does not consider it good etiquette for him to watch the olives go through the various stages: the grinding into pulp by the big millstone, the putting of the pulp into the goat hair or jute "folders," the pressing of these folders under 150 pounds of pressure, the pulling out of the folders and their re-

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Sara Katsani EH14..
Vlachs EH15

On the credit side, one must reckon 5 to 7 okas of milk each year from the producing animals for family consumption, with some of this being worked into cheese. The family also has a supply of meat from the flock. But the greatest gain is a 15 percent annual increase in the flock that the owner can expect even if he sells the lambs listed in the table of income; this means that a year later the flock of 700 should number 805, barring serious diseases or natural disasters.

Some of the discussions revealed further interesting facts: winter pasture costs 50 drachmas per animal in winter and 20 in summer; a sheep needs more than one oka of salt each year; the chief shepherd, when he goes on business trips to arrange for the sale of his milk or lambs or to hire shepherds, travels by bus, sleeps in a hotel, eats in restaurants, and thinks of himself as a businessman; there is a small tax per oka of milk which is paid to the winter community by the "grocer," who buys the milk.

What was to have been a short conference beginning at five in the late afternoon extended to nine o'clock without a moment's let-up. There was much loud talking, which would lead a stranger to expect a fight the next minute; but then someone would make a humorous remark at which everyone would laugh. Use of pantomine, modulated voice control, appeal to the neutral listener to agree to the case one was presenting, humor, and willingness to follow an argument to its logical conclusion — all made one think of the agora of classic Athens transferred to a dimly lit, modestly furnished upstairs office of a gentle, well-informed government bureaucrat. And just at the crescendo of what seemed to be the verbal prelude to physical violence, the words "symphonia, symphonia" would ring out, thus showing that agreement had been reached. Voices and feelings would calm down for a while, before some new dramatic moment would build up again. Berates, the Karagoun, sat more quietly than the rest but seemed to enjoy the session just as much.

As we parted in the dark streets of Ioannina, where Turkish architecture with its balconies and minarets in the moonlight makes one suddenly feel very much a part of the East, Christos Berates agreed to visit us late on the next day in Konitsa and take us out to his night encampment.

In the time intervening, through the courtesy of the director of agriculture, I had an opportunity to read the classic Greek work on the nomads, published in 1925 as a bulletin of the Greek Agricultural Society under the title of *Nomadic, Permanent and Agricultural Livestock Production in Greece*.[11] It was most encouraging to find that the observations I had made corresponded as far as they went to those of the author, Demosthenes Sirakes. Needless to say, he provided many more details than I could have collected in the time at my disposal.

For one thing, he estimated the nomad livestock owners in 1925 at 13,700 families, divided as follows:

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tives who approach him than he would to others. A Greek who has gone to the United States will send money first to his own parents for their use or for the use of his younger brothers and sisters; then, if he has enough, he may give some to his poorer relatives — who are usually not backward about making their needs known. In some villages the rich men who give generously to their relatives are said to do so in the hope that more people will light candles for them. Kinship and matters related to it are discussed a great deal by village folk, a testimony to its interest and importance in their lives. What varies most of all throughout the country is the extent to which Western and urban ideas have penetrated to the point that individuals think primarily of their own immediate family and only secondarily — and perhaps only a little — about the larger family connection of which they are a part. Nevertheless, throughout the country, among all types of villagers, the family is still the basic unit; the father is supposedly "the head of the house"; and children "know their place."

One of the most straightforward characterizations of Greek family life I heard came not from a social worker, a home economist, or a political leader who knew the villagers well; it came from a bright but uneducated peasant girl who was asked to tell about the family life in her village in the northern Peloponnesos:

> The immediate family consists of the father and mother, and the children and parents of the family heads. There are usually no other relatives living in the house.
>
> The duties of the man: his highest duty is to provide a dowry for his daughters; send sons to school; enlarge the house; add to the fields.
>
> The duties of the wife: to have children and look after them; to look after her husband (have him clean, feed him, be obedient to him); clean the house; do all the work and see that the boys are good workers; start weaving and embroidery for the daughters' dowry; work in the field; respect older people; see that religious ceremonies are observed in the home. The duties of the mother are severe, for the father is out all the time — during the day he works and in the evening he is in the coffeehouse.
>
> The duties of children: to be good at school; at home obedient (although they seldom are); respect older people; work during part of leisure time, not because their work is needed but because they should get used to working.
>
> The duties of old people: to look after the little children, take them away to give the wife some quiet; tell stories to the children; and otherwise do what they like. When sons and daughters marry, the old people expect the young folks to take over and let them rest.

This thumbnail sketch of Greek family life provides a general outline into which hundreds of colorful details can be fitted. Many of these revolve about the role of the woman in the home and her relationship with her husband and children.

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Woman's work in Greece, as elsewhere, does not lend itself to neat, logical treatment. It does not have a beginning or any definable end. As a result, discussion of it moves from one topic to another with no necessary connection between them except the fact of the woman's involvement. As a wife, she is a partner to her husband; she bears and mothers the children; she prepares the food and still makes much of the clothing at home; she helps with the farm tasks; she has the responsibility for keeping the family well, or at least seeing an ailing member through an illness. To follow the women through the variety of these experiences is to move to the center of family life in rural Greece.

Getting Along with the Lord and Master

The world of the Greek woman revolves around the man. When young, her first concern — and the concern of her family — is to find a man and, through a dowry, "buy" him. After marriage she moves unobtrusively in his orbit and keeps their children, when they begin to arrive, in their proper course. Tradition still influences the way the woman gets along with the man.

In any social relationship, including that between husband and wife, a pattern of dominance and subordination develops. The Greeks assume that the man has the higher position. One village woman, when commenting on this, said with genuine earnestness: "My husband is a superior being; I must keep my distance." This sentiment is reflected in the relative social status of men and women, as well as in legal, moral, political, and economic rights. But even in delineating the differences in status between husband and wife one must bear in mind that broad social changes are under way throughout all of Greece which are leading to a rise in woman's position.

Some indication of woman's place is given by the preference for boys over girls. In some parts of Greece, a man when asked how many children he has will reply: "Two sons and, begging your pardon, one daughter." Or he might say: "Two children, one girl." In some villages of Thrace, however, the father might use a poetic touch in answering "two sons, one guest," implying that the daughter's permanent home is that of her husband. Since, true to the patriarchal, agrarian tradition, the line is continued in the son, one of the tests of a father's manliness is his ability to procreate sons. Preference for a son is reinforced by the need to collect a dowry for a daughter, who thus represents an economic drain. Indeed, the interest in the sex of the unborn child is so great that many ways have been developed for predicting the birth of a boy or a girl. Such practices, although taken jokingly or at best semiseriously by many, do figure prominently in women's conversations.

In Aetolia a relatively simple method may be used. One need only take a piece of wood from the loom, put it in a public road, and see who passes over it. If a man does, a boy is on the way; if a woman, a girl. In Gortynia,

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you put an orange seed in the fire and name a pregnant woman. If the seed jumps high, it will be a boy; if low, a girl. Much is made of the size and shape of the child in the womb. If the expectant mother "has a small belly," she will have a boy. Another method is to wrap a knife in a handkerchief and put it in a chair. If a pregnant woman sits in the chair, feels the object, and identifies it as a knife, then she will bear a boy. The same will hold true if by chance she uses her right foot every time she steps into a house. Or one can take the half-moon bone from the head of a fish, throw it on the head of an expectant mother without her knowledge. If she starts looking down, she will deliver a girl; if she feels in her hair to see what hit her, she will have a boy. Thus, from his earliest days, a son is given a sense of importance, a feeling which tends to be accentuated as he grows older.

Women, by observing the formal proprieties, show their deference to men and seemingly manifest to all about them their status as inferior beings. Foreigners in Greece are deceived, however, if they mistake this *form* for the *essence* of family life, since the Greek mother is a key figure in the home, even though she stands up when her husband comes into the room or walks if there is only one donkey. Village men, when asked about this last practice, often reply, "Why, my wife would be ashamed to be seen riding if I were walking. The other women would laugh her out of the village." Younger men, whose ideas on these matters differ from those of the previous generation, proudly assert that they make their wives ride if tired. Yet the women who may be walking behind their mounted husbands do not feel inferior, for they are observing an accepted custom. According to some observers, a woman who lets her husband enter first or have the best chair feels no more inferior than would a man in the West who holds the door open for a woman or gives her his seat on a crowded subway.

It is hard to know what goes on in a woman's mind when she is at the fountain filling two five-gallon tins to carry back home and suddenly is joined by her husband who has just returned from town by bus with a small twine bag of groceries. He offers the bag to her and says that he will carry the heavy tins, but she refuses. Does she say to herself: "He has his work and I have my work"; "I don't want the other men to laugh at him carrying water, which is woman's work"; "I don't want the women laughing at me for letting my husband do my work when I'm capable of doing it"; "He probably offers to do this for me so he can ask me to do something else much more disagreeable"? Nevertheless, the upshot is that she carries the tins. To be sure, the women refuse to smile when they hear the men in the home joking about the way some husband in Northern Greece, at the end of the Communist guerrilla war, supposedly made his wife walk in front in order to protect him from any undetected land mines left over from the war.

If the wife has worries, she discusses them with other women and only occasionally with her husband.

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If he is thinking of buying land, he is apt to follow his own inclinations. The wife's own little private purse consists of money she gets from chickens and milk. She uses this money to meet "gaps in her budget."

Secondly, my informant pointed out, the wife is very influential with her husband when he is selecting a mate for the children. The father must give the official approval and the village looks to him, but the mother is the one who influences him. Rarely will the mother betray a naughty child to the man of the house, for she thinks the man might beat him too hard. She might refer discipline to the father if the child is fourteen or over or if he gets out of hand. In other words, children are threatened with the father. If the mother is the pillar of the house and the father considered weak, then the children protect the mother. If the mother is "no good," then everything is referred to and channeled to the father. In fact, a wife is called "no good" or "an animal" if she does not darn properly, sew all the clothes of the family, be economical with food, have meals ready when the others return from the field, or keep the house tidy.

Two home economists who had worked extensively in the villages of Northern and Central Greece reaffirmed that "the man is really the boss, not just in appearance but in practice": "When we want the girls to come to take lessons in home economics the girls say, 'My father won't let me.' But woman is the unknown heroine. Besides carrying all of the load she is also involved in major decisions. If the man tells his wife to go to the field to work and she refuses, they may quarrel, but if she has a reason he won't insist. Eggs and poultry are her responsibility and she can have her own money to get what she wants — such as shoes. In the everyday life of the children, the woman has the upper hand, but in decisions such as sending a son to the university the man will decide."

These two home economists made the further observation that the "married couple will quarrel if the man drinks too much, but the woman is inclined to keep her problems to herself and will not go home to her parents if she feels imposed upon. In general, romance in the Western sense does not exist, but there is a feeling of attachment and understanding. A good analogy is that between a senior and junior partner in some major undertaking."

One villager from Central Greece, a secretary of his local community council, summed up the status of woman by saying, "in the home the woman has the veto power."

There are several interpretations that might be placed on the seeming dominance of the man in Greek society. I could always arouse spirited discussion in any coffeehouse when I suggested that women were really the dominant force, that they had learned that their security lay in letting the men feel very important while the women went through the motions of showing respect to them. Actually, so this argument runs, women have made

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535 [773] ing abyss below, with their children clasped in their arms. "Farewell ye springs, ye forests, ye mountain-ridges" begins the folksong which accompanies this dance.[8] Thus the dance keeps alive in the memory of the people what their forebears suffered under the alien Turks. The *zervos,* another syrtos dance, is "left-handed" in that the dancers move from left to right rather than in the customary direction from right to left.

Perhaps the most picturesque leaping dance is the *tsamikos* of Epirus, the region where the Souliote women lived. In dancing this even today the men sometimes wear their small arms as they used to many years ago, reminiscent of the ancient Pyrrhic armed dances. This dance and the [186] zalongos, mentioned above, have done much to re-emphasize the stereo- [829] typed image common throughout Greece that Epirus is a place of violence, heroic men and women, and a fortress of the independent spirit. Other leaping dances derive from the *klephts,* or guerrillas who fought against the Turks before Northern Greece gained her independence in this century. The chief dance in Thessaly is the *karagouna,* probably Wallachian in origin; the *yerakina,* which is a Thracian dance, has also become popular throughout Greece.

The most common example of the mixed type is the *hasapikos,* or butchers' dance, which comes down from Byzantine times when the butchers' [522] guild used this dance on its feast days. Whereas many of the other dances are stately or heroic, this one provides an outlet for considerable comic activity by dancers so inclined. In other words, there are dances to suit everyone's taste and it is up to the leader, who pays the musicians, to call for the dance he wants and at which he is most adept. Certain dances are prescribed for certain occasions but, once the formalities have been observed, other dances can be chosen. It is disconcerting to a visitor, who has 535 been held entranced by the color, intricacies, and ancient lineage of the 177 folk dances, to hear the orchestra strike up some American popular music of twenty or twenty-five years ago and then see the young people shift from the round dances to dancing in couples. Young men who have displayed great agility in their leaps in a klephtic dance now have to be led like sheep by the girls who have taken the trouble to learn a few of the new steps; or if the girls do not know the steps either, the boy, usually a beat or two behind the music, tries to imitate the movements of some good dancer.

527 Thus festival days bring everything one could ask to a village: dances 574 old and new, visitors of every description, wares not often sold locally, and an occasion to eat and drink to one's full capacity without fear of criticism. [521] Most of all, it gives the community a chance to have its day in the sun, to be the cynosure of the surrounding territory, and to store up incidents which family members and neighbors can talk about in the days ahead.

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[XI]

The Village Coffeehouse

Eventually the coffeehouse, instead of being merely the setting for many lively conversations about village life, became an object of interest in its own right. It, too, is a village institution which takes its rank along with the school and the church. The coffeehouse, or *kapheneion*, is more than just a structure. Like the English pub, it is a place of assembly, a communication center, a place to transact business, satisfy one's thirst, or find out about the health of one's friend.

Most coffeehouses are located near the main square or at some crossroads where things are apt to happen. They find their fullest development in the cities. In the early evening, the time of day when Washington "rolls up its sidewalks" and becomes quieter and quieter, the squares of Athens, the Greek capital, literally burst into life. Constitution Square, for instance, after hundreds of chairs, which have been stacked during the day, are set up around small tables, the waiters begin their hazardous dashes back and forth across the busy street to the food shops which line the square. Their frenetic activity contrasts with the leisurely attack by the patrons upon the small cup of sweet, sirupy coffee and glass of water before them, although a conversation at some table may reach such proportions that one becomes oblivious to the automobile horns, the radio blaring out some popular tune, or the clink of spoons on a glass as people try to attract the attention of a waiter.

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supporting Greek version of "Standing on the Corner, Watching All the Girls Go By."

Or, in Northern Greece and the Grammos Mountains, one would find in the village of Kotili, with about six hundred people, that there were two shops which sold cigarettes and coffee.[2] A score of the men, in addition to being farmers and shepherds, were woodworkers; another score were masons, and one was a cobbler. That represented the specialization of that village, since all the other men were farmers-shepherds-laborers. But it is at coffeehouses such as those in Kotili, close by the border, that one gains an insight into the real meaning of Balkan politics. For here the older villagers will tell the visitor of the days back in the first decade of the century when Bulgarian *komitadjis,* while the area was still under Turkey, came to try to persuade the people to join the Bulgarian cause. But the people remained loyal to the orders of their church authorities and resisted the efforts of the Bulgarians to enroll their local children in special schools or to enlist the adults in a premature revolt against the Turks. As one listens to the stories of violence and national struggle, the surrounding mountains which at first seemed peaceful begin to assume a brooding look. And one learns that national traditions are preserved and passed on in the coffeehouse, with the old men telling the eager young men of the price that was paid to keep them Greek.

Vamvakia, on the Serrai plains, provides a final illustration of the combined variety shop–coffeehouse.[3] This village, too, numbers about six hundred people and has as its only business a cheese-making establishment and three coffeehouses. There is also one carriage maker who farms as well. The merchandise for the shops is brought from Serrai by the bus driver, who takes in the orders and brings back the supplies for a small fee. These coffeehouses are of brick and clay-mud construction and have the usual equipment of small tables and chairs. Two of them have battery radios for the entertainment of the customers. Coffee is the usual beverage, while ouzo and soda drinks (in summer) are also popular. Spoon sweets, such as vanilla or fruit preserves, are often sold.

We may conclude, therefore, that in most villagers of less than a thousand people one will generally find coffeehouses of the combined variety-shop type. Although the women may now and then view them as shops, the men almost invariably think of them as coffeehouses. This social function outweighs any economic function they might possess.

As size increases, say to more than a thousand people, the variety shops and grocery stores become separate establishments and the coffeehouse devotes itself almost exclusively to serving beverages. This is what most Greeks would consider the typical village coffeehouse, although the relative numbers of each kind are not known.

The specialized coffeehouses can frequently accommodate fifty to seventy

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[The Village Coffeehouse]

275 443 [427] people without any great difficulty. Many of the buildings are rented by the proprietors either from some owner who built them as an investment or from the community, which derives income from the structure. In a Macedonian village of Kimine, twenty-four miles from Salonica, there are three coffeehouses:

[403] All have adequate furniture, little tables and chairs being the standard coffeehouse equipment. All are fortunate to have battery radios also. . . . The largest coffeehouse is a community building and is rented from the community. Most of the village's middle-aged men frequent here. . . . The second coffeehouse is also rented, this time from a private owner. This coffeehouse is smaller and much neater than the previous one. Here we usually find the old men of the village, sitting around and quietly drinking and talking. The third coffeehouse is the meeting place of all the younger men in the village. This is a new building, pleasant and big.[4]

275 369 443 [562] [273] The third type of coffeehouse, found much more frequently where urban influences are strong, seldom sells ouzo and other alcoholic drinks, not because of any temperance drives, but because it caters to those who prefer coffee and an occasional sweet. This type is much more apt to be patronized by women, often in the company of a husband or father. Elsewhere in the village or town will be found *tavernas*, where wine — often that produced by the owner for his own clientele — is served in an outside courtyard with food. Many travelers to Greece have commented on the moderate use of alcoholic beverages in that country and have often pointed out that they never saw more than one or two drunk people during their whole sojourn.

But all three types of coffeehouses — the combined variety shop, the drink emporium, where liquor is served as well as coffee, and the urban type where only coffee is served — are important for reasons other than what is consumed. That is secondary, for many villagers visit a coffeehouse without buying a single drink or sweet.

Coffeehouse Attractions

275 ●521 208 [571] As I sat in scores of Greek coffeehouses I wondered, in looking around me, why these particular men were present at this time and what the rest of the village men were doing. I also tried to find out why certain men, perhaps five or six, were talking to each other around one table while another five or six were in earnest conversation around another table. And here and there I would find a smaller group of two or three seriously intent upon some point of discussion. What formed the nucleus of each group? Did the same people tend to cluster together each time they came to the coffeehouse? This was more than idle curiosity on my part, for I knew that the answer to such questions would reveal a great deal about how public opinion was formed in the village, opinion which in turn would be directly related to Greek national policy and even to Greek-American relations. In

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the Greek coffeehouses we find the equivalent of what Chester Bowles has referred to as the "tea house jury":

> One evening in Taipeh I asked a world-wise old Chinese diplomat what he thought would happen on the mainland. "Have you ever been to China?" he asked. When I said that I had not, he said, "In every one of China's one million villages is a tea house. Every day at the tea hour the people, especially the wise people of the village, gather to talk.
>
> "Chiang lost," the old man continued, "because this great 'tea house jury' decided that he had failed. The villagers came to believe that the Communists could do no worse, and they might be better.
>
> "Someday perhaps the 'tea house jury' will bring a verdict against Mao. Then China will be ready for a change." [8]

Although my study of the Greek coffeehouse never got beyond the introductory stage, I felt fortunate indeed to find that the investigation by John Photiadis of Stavroupolis in Macedonia had addressed itself to many of the specific questions in which I had been interested.[9] No one would claim that all of his findings for one village in Northern Greece would automatically apply to the whole country, but they do possess enough generality to provide some penetrating insight. For example, his discussion * of the coffeehouse attractions are most helpful.

The primary appeal is *kouvenda,* or conversation, explained as follows:

> *Kouvenda* means conversation without any particular purpose, a recognized form of "passing the time." It is rarely desultory, or the mere exchange of ideas or description of events, or delving into the past in a quiet manner. But sometimes it is contrapuntal virtuosity, incisive, combative, loud, a statement or a question is countered by a challenging question, tact and gentleness have no part, insults are hurled, but within appropriate limits. A discussion is a battle of personal opinions, and its end is neither to reach truth nor to reach a conclusion; its end is sheer enjoyment of vigorous speech. But whatever impression this occupation of passing the time makes on someone who is a stranger to this custom, to these people it is their enjoyment. It constitutes one of the attractions that makes the coffeehouse a necessity for the villager.

Photiadis points out that during the kouvenda the participant is involved emotionally, is not only trying to prove his point but is also enjoying this oratory. The irresponsible statements are not to be taken seriously, although they sometimes are, with unfortunate consequences. In this connection, I was always interested in what the men argued about most in the village coffeehouses and found that they did not discuss politics to the same extent as the denizens of the urban coffeehouses. They preferred to talk about community affairs, crops, and personalities, although the announcement about some

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* Relying on some of Dorothy Lee's analysis.

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275 earth-shaking political event would call forth a variety of opinions forcefully expressed.
571 A second attraction is drinking with one's friends. According to Photiadis: 1/1

[521] [273] The alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverages tend to contribute to a considerable degree to the attraction of the coffeehouse, even though the men can drink all they want in their own homes. *Ouzo*, the alcoholic drink, is drunk only in the coffeehouse. When asked why they don't drink it at home and save money, they will answer that "*ouzo* is drunk only with good company."

275 576 593 571 561 It is interesting to remember what has already been pointed out: that a son is customarily supposed to visit a coffeehouse in which his father is not likely to be found. Although "times are changing," a breach of this custom throughout much of rural Greece would still be considered disrespectful. It may have some connection with the fact that a father, who is supposed to set a good example before his son, might find his storytelling or his convivial drinking dampened if a son were present. This is why, in village after village, where there are almost always three coffeehouses, one is favored by the old men, another by the middle-aged, and the third by the young people. Informants will say that the young people will go to their coffeeshop because one can listen to phonograph records, watch the girls pass by, or play noisy games that the older men might not tolerate. The real reason for differentiation may lie in the older traditions which originated in the men's desire to drink with their friends and equals. Photiadis in his study points out how the Greek peasant during his hours at work looks forward eagerly to the time of day when he can go "to the coffeehouse to meet his friends, have a few drinks, and continue this cycle again and again."

275 524 [273] [525] [578] A third source of pleasure in the coffeehouse is the games. Playing for drinks is common with the loser paying for them. Very rarely do they play for money since it is prohibited by law. Sometimes they become involved in a game quite emotionally and when the game is over they eagerly look forward to the next meeting. A good card player is well-known and therefore is always surrounded by others watching him. Quarrels sometimes go along with the game. Characteristic is the sarcasm of the winner, or perhaps the participants, which tends to raise their emotions.

In addition to various kinds of card games, backgammon is commonly played. Once in a while one sees a chess game in progress.

275 204 207 A fourth and very important attraction of the coffeehouse is the availability of the recent newspaper and a radio. As Photiadis says:

Non-farmers or part-time farmers stop to listen to the early news before they go to their work. During the day the older men sit for many hours in the coffeehouse listening to the radio. In the busy coffeehouse the early part of the eve-

1/1 [Who described the Northern Greek village of Stavroupolis - ANALYST]

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ning or the very late hours are the times when the people pay most attention to the radio. During the busy evening hours it is very difficult to listen to or enjoy the radio because of the noise the participants make.

The different outsiders who stop by the coffeehouse, particularly the most central and attractive one, bring news and diversion. The bus driver, a government official en route to some other village, a commission merchant after agricultural products or livestock, a stray American tourist, are links with the larger society. Frequently, some offhand remark by one such stranger, because it has the ring of authority, influences the opinions of those present and thereby the opinions of others in the village who receive the information secondhand. Not to be overlooked, of course, is the eye-witness report some fellow villager brings back from the city or a provincial town where he has gone to arrange a business or legal matter. More often than not he can hardly wait to get to the coffeehouse so that he can hold the spotlight as long as he can stretch out the account of what he saw.

These attractions do not begin to exhaust all the possibilities. Anyone with business to transact arranges to meet the other party or parties at a coffeehouse. One may also go to the same place for a haircut. In Kimine, all three of the coffeehouses have what passes for a barber shop in one corner. Since there is no partitioning, the barber chair, mirror, and all tonsorial activities are in full view of the coffeehouse patrons. The barber is particularly in his glory on Saturday and Sunday nights, when the coffeehouses are at their busiest. Likewise, in Anthili, in Central Greece, the three barbers there ply their trade in the coffeehouses, and so it is throughout most of rural Greece. Now and then one even comes across a singing barber who entertains when business is slack. Most coffeehouse proprietors consider him a prize asset.

The Coffeehouse Clientele

But knowing what attracts the villagers to the coffeehouse does not tell us who is attracted and to what coffeehouses. Nor does it give us sufficient insight into the way community decisions are reached in the coffeehouse setting. For such information we need to take a closer look at the findings for Stavroupolis:

> Ninety percent of the adult males of the village visit at least one of the seven coffeehouses from time to time. Almost all of these go at least 1–2 days a month throughout the year, with about four fifths going an average of at least 1–2 days a week.
>
> More people go during the summer, but those who go during the winter go more often. Most people vary their frequency from winter to summer and those who change least are obviously those who go every day.
>
> Most people spend at least an hour whenever they go to the coffeehouse, but

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the relative upon whom he might need to call at a later date. Many men are careful to visit two or more shops from time to time "so as not to offend any of the proprietors." Also, as one informant put it, "The peasant comes from the field, washes up, goes for a drink to a coffeehouse where he might be tied by blood, but in order to do business he goes to other coffeehouses to find people with whom to arrange use of animals for plowing, etc., and will stop for a drink with these people."

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Anyone trying to understand the sociology of Greek village life needs to pay special attention to these coffeehouse groups. First of all, the regular patrons of each coffeehouse can be viewed as a group whose members possess certain bonds in common. They have heard many of the same stories; they have learned to react in almost the same way to the buffoon, the over-important person, and the fellow villager constantly seeking sympathy. Although they may frequent a second coffeehouse, they are apt to feel a primary loyalty to their first choice and will find any number of reasons to justify their opinion that it is the best coffeehouse in the village.

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This general group, however, most of the time is broken down into cliques, varying in size from two during the day to as many as seven persons by evening. Each group has its own informal leader. According to Photiadis: "The informal leader in the coffeehouse gives the other members of his clique group his advice and the satisfaction that they are associating with a person of higher status, while he has the satisfaction of performing his role, the dynamic aspect of his status, which is his reward." Therefore, when some outsider, such as an agricultural agent, approaches the farmers at a particular table, the informal leader considers him a rival. "The agent is a person of higher status who can talk about things the others cannot. This exclusive selling of ideas makes the informal leader feel that his authority is lowered in the eyes of his subordinates, and as a result, he fears that he will lose the satisfaction he has had." No wonder, then, that he is very likely to oppose the ideas which the agricultural agent is trying to advance.

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Of special interest is the way news spreads from one clique to the next as part of the community-wide decision on some proposal new to the village. Photiadis takes as an illustration the use of a new insecticide which had been demonstrated by the agricultural agent to a number of farmers earlier in the day:

> The cliques which have members who have seen the demonstration will start discussing the matter and, after a series of objections and agreements, they will probably reach a decision or have split decisions. The opinion of the informal leader during this discussion has a considerable influence on certain members.
>
> Around the table of each clique there are usually one or more persons belonging to other cliques, or there are isolates sitting with the clique. These "isolates" . . . often move from table to table exchanging ideas or presenting the

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decision of the previous group as their own. The store owner and the waiter, who know everyone's business, present the opinion of the group on the matter while they are serving them. In this way the uninformed cliques are informed of the matter and the others have a new aspect of the topic for discussion if it differs from their own. Through this process, each clique's opinion diffuses through the coffeehouse. The rate of this diffusion varies according to the importance of the topic. If the subject is more important than usual, the leaders will find some means of discussing it among themselves, or a number of people may ask the opinion of informal leaders belonging to other cliques.

But the matter does not rest there. Many people move from one coffeehouse to another and introduce as their own the general consensus prevailing in the coffeehouse from which they have come. Thus, the men of the community tend to form a "public opinion" on a matter, frequently basing their decisions on either flimsy or inaccurate evidence. They prefer to be psychologically related to what others in their clique or coffeehouse think rather than to be individualistic and out of step with the rest. Truly, there is in Greece a "coffeehouse jury."

The Coffeehouse as a Mixed Blessing

The coffeehouse has its critics throughout Greece. Those responsible for improving the economic situation cite the economic disadvantages resulting from the unproductive expenditures at the coffeehouse as well as the many hours wasted there. This is recognized as a regional matter, for in many villages, such as those on Mount Pelion near Volos, one seldom sees people at the coffeehouse during the day. But in many of the mountain villages elsewhere, where economic opportunities are particularly lacking, more time is spent in such places.

Some oppose the coffeehouse on moral grounds. From time to time wives berate their husbands — not for economic inefficiency — but for drinking too much ouzo or for gambling away money that the family desperately needs. It also is said to corrupt youth. The nomarch of Thessalonike, Kostis Koukourides, pointed out: "The coffeehouses are our misfortune. I have two objections to them: the lost time and the bad habits of drinking and gambling. They also corrupt the youth, for in earlier times a boy had to be twenty-five years of age to go into the coffeehouse and would then never sit with the elders. Now he does so, which shows that he is losing respect for his elders."

Schoolteachers and agricultural-extension workers, although admitting that the coffeehouse can at times serve as a useful forum, generally think of it as a place where much misinformation spreads. It irritates an agricultural worker to think that he has persuaded a peasant to adopt some new farm practice only to learn the next day that the peasant has decided against it

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because of a conversation the previous evening with his cronies at the coffeehouse. One villager got to the crux of the matter: "In the coffeehouse we get into arguments over our political leaders and don't attend to our fields. We do this because we are uneducated and people do little to help us, and so we spend our time on foolish things. The government doesn't send people here to instruct us; we are farming the way our fathers did."

With the spread of the program of agricultural extension, perhaps this peasant can no longer legitimately make the same complaint, but the chances are that the men of his village are still arguing about many matters and, perhaps in his opinion, spending their time on "foolish things."

Even the critics admit that there are still many conditions which encourage the men to patronize the coffeehouse quite apart from the attractions already described. For most village men, home is a most unattractive place in the evening. Dimly lit, poorly heated in cold weather, dominated by women and their silly prattle, the home cannot begin to compete with the masculine company found at the coffeehouse. Furthermore, most men can think up perfectly valid reasons (in their opinion, at least) for going to the coffeehouse: they have a business matter to talk over; they want to know how some world crisis is shaping up; they need some advice on a farming decision.

Should they be found at the coffeehouse during the daytime, when conscientious farmers might be finding something worthwhile to do, they do not experience many twinges of conscience. They are not pricked by any Puritan ethic that teaches them constantly to be busy; instead, they save their energies for the time and place where it is unquestionably in their interest to work hard and long. When no such occasion presents itself, what more could a man ask than to enjoy his leisure, unplanned and unsought though it be? Nor does he think that it is up to him to seek out productive uses of his time. If people have good employment opportunities, they will seek him out, and he will respond. If he is from the tobacco-growing districts, the chances are that he has put his only resources (wife and children) to work for him and can take his ease until he must return to see how the work has progressed. He has no idle capital to invest but does his best with the human labor at his command. When heavy work is required, he will do his part, but when that is done others can harvest, string, and manipulate the tobacco. He provides the entrepreneurial skill.

Perhaps the coffeehouse and the attitudes of its habitués clash more strongly with American value orientations than do any other aspects of village life. To the Greek peasant, to be idle is no sin; to converse in the kouvenda can be as satisfying as to be a spectator sportsman; to seek to learn "what's new" if you live in a village is just as worthy as the search for novelty which motivates many in the United States. To get away from the women, the Greek peasant does not have to go on a long hunting trip to

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period of at least two months. Women are again hired to do the job. But this time, the women from Vasilika and from the neighboring villages who had been free to do the hoeing are not necessarily free to spend away from home the prolonged period required for picking. The local women can and do hire out when they are free, but they can be free only sporadically, for their own fields also need some attention every day, even if their cotton production is not extensive. Therefore, the intermittent wage labor of the neighborhood women is augmented by labor from more distant regions where no cotton is grown, and where the early fall is therefore a slack season in the agricultural cycle. In 1955, six Vasilika farmers took the train to Trikala (near Larissa) and brought back with them thirty women who then worked in Vasilika for almost two months. Each of the farmers took responsibility for five or six women; he paid their round trip fare, put them up in his home, and furnished them with food. As a net wage, he paid them for picking the cotton in his fields one to two drachmas per *oka* (one *oka* equals two and eight-tenths pounds) of cotton picked. A serious, mature worker can regularly pick about forty *okadhes* a day.

In the picking season the farmer's main concern is to finish the job before the winter rains set in. If prolonged rains come early, the value of the cotton is lowered, and the processing of it involves additional expense. If the cotton has to be picked while it is still damp, it must be picked with the pod, and later must be separated from the pod by hand. The farmers paid hired workers a drachma per *oka* for the job.

While the women are picking cotton, the men of the household weigh the filled bags, keep records of the amount each woman picks, and use the horses, donkeys, or mules to haul the cotton from the fields. It is stored in the stone barns, in the lower storage rooms of the houses, and, as a matter of fact, when other space is no longer available, in any room in the house. Trucks from the cotton gins in Levadhia come through the village and collect the cotton. Farmers keep track of the weight of cotton they send to be ginned but do not identify their own sacks. The ginning costs six percent of the original weight of the cotton, a percentage which the gin owner keeps for himself. The farmers use the seed returned to them for the next year's planting, and also have some of it pressed into cakes for use as supplementary fodder for the ewes at lambing time. The cotton itself is again stored in sacks to await sale to merchants who visit the villages. During the season, the cotton is also used as a medium of exchange. Itinerant vendors selling fish or oranges, for example, are willing to take raw cotton instead of cash in payment.

The price at which the farmers sell the cotton to the merchants is never high enough to satisfy the farmers, who feel they get a disproportionately small share of the ultimate value of the cotton. We were once host to some urban visitors and to some of the village's leading men. In the course of the afternoon a heated and eloquent discussion on cotton prices developed. The farmers contended that by the time they paid the costs for machinery, fuel, hired labor, and calculated, in addition, the value of the labor of the members of their households, they made scarcely any profit at all on the cotton. The visitors, on the other hand, insisted that it was wrong to include the labor of their households as part of the

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eliminate the objective, realistic discomforts of living with somewhat unpredictable human beings, but the cultural expectation does seem to eliminate some of the intensity generated by the conflict.

The total situation does not result in an inability to predict the behavior of others to the point of chaos in human relationships, but rather in an expectation on the part of the villagers of a wide range of alternative actions and responses by others. There is uncertainty within set limits, but there is also an enjoyment of, and a taste for, the unpredictable. In a sense, when the villagers know each other so well that they can predict reactions with some precision, they are bored and look for other diversion.

Conversation and Argument

So far, teasing and deceptive acts have been stressed as elements in the contest of human relations. We may now turn to another type of weapon: conversation and argument. Students of Greek society and culture invariably mention the Greek's love of talk. The villagers of Vasilika are not different in this respect. Again, even infants become accustomed to a stream of conversation whenever others are around them, and they themselves are talked to and are assumed to make responses. When babies cry they are often said to be talking, *"Milai to moro,"* and *milai* is the standard word for talk. If a baby hiccoughs, they say it is talking to someone who is absent, such as a maternal grandmother in another village. By listening to the talk around him, and by participating in it, the young child learns the functions of speech. In the village, children may be told to be quiet when they interrupt adult conversation, but this occurs only when the elders do not want to be interrupted. Children are not silenced on any general principle that they should be seen and not heard.

A child in the village quickly learns that some kinds of conversations communicate information, that others are merely a verbal accompaniment to activities, and still others are a form of recreation and part of the contest in human relations. Inside their homes children hear discussions of plans for the day and speculations about the weather and about neighbors. This kind of talk is a form of fairly direct transfer of thought and information. The child also learns that many ordinary, apparently routine activities are carried on to the accompaniment of a stream of comment and advice and that only a small proportion of what is said genuinely influences the person to whom the advice is given. For example, if neighbors are visiting with a woman who is about to place some loaves of bread in the oven, a discussion ensues as to what design to use for the slits in the top of the loaf, as to whether the bread has risen sufficiently, and as to whether the oven is hot enough. The housewife may have been baking bread every week or so for twenty years, but the discussion could easily give an outsider the impression that she was a novice. Agricultural decisions, such as on just how to place a few corn plants in amongst the rows of cotton, are discussed anew each year. Even at a baptism in Vasilika, the ceremony is punctuated by comments as to whether the baptismal water is too hot or too cold and as to how to wrap the

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dripping baby after his total immersion. Guests call out remarks about the way the baby is being dressed; its bonnet strings, for example, are said to be too tight or too long, and so on.

Such comment and advice on recurrent, apparently routine activities serves simultaneously to express and to reinforce a particular point of view—the point of view that each event, no matter how often similar ones have occurred before, is essentially fresh and unique (Miller 1950:16). In a sense, the villagers impose variation and uncertainty on events which have no intrinsically adventurous elements. What, from the villager's standpoint, is the monotonous regularity of ordinary tasks is relieved by verbal exploration of the range of small variations possible. Even when people are alone they apparently prefer to change the time, or the place, or the order in which they perform recurring activities. For example, a woman who sifts flour and kneads dough for bread varies the time of day at which she starts the process, the part of the household in which she does these jobs (sometimes in the ground-floor room, sometimes in the storehouse, and in different corners of these rooms), and the extent to which she completes the sifting at one sitting. Some of these variations are dictated by external conditions such as weather or the time available from work in the fields; but others appear to be efforts simply to alleviate the felt boredom of routine activities. The feeling of security which many Americans derive from the regular performance of routine tasks seems unknown in Vasilika.

The stream of comment and advice associated with ordinary activities is very similar to the stream of orders and requests directed at children by their elders. Children learn that they are often not chastised for failing to respond immediately to a command such as "*Katse kala*," "Sit nicely," or "Be good." Moreover, they learn that specific commands to run errands or to stop playing in the mud will be repeated several times before a parent gets exasperated, and there will be other times at which the parent or older brother or sister is distracted by something else and will forget the command entirely. The tone of voice of the older person informs the child when an order is meant seriously, but, in the meantime, he responds to or ignores many orders about which his elders have a less firm conviction, and his reaction depends upon his mood of the moment. The elders' words may even include threats that the child will "eat wood," that is, "be beaten" if he does not behave, and a parent may go so far as to threaten to kill a child who misbehaves. But even these threats do not elicit immediate response. (In fact, children are very rarely beaten. Physical coercion consists of an occasional slap on the back of the head, and children may be shoved, or pulled by the ear in one direction or another). It seems, then, that disobedience is not in and of itself considered a sign of disrespect to parents. In the villager's view, a child should listen to what his parents tell him because they are more intelligent, have better judgment, and have the child's welfare at heart. Very young children, the villagers believe, do not have sense enough to know this and so can scarcely be expected to respond without a bit of a push, and older children may be stubborn. Even *pisma* (stubbornness) is grudgingly admired in a child if he exercises it with moderation.

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Children do, of course, run many errands and do respond to many orders given them. The point here is that the process has some of the quality of capriciousness we have seen in other contexts.

The capriciousness of human relationships is also understandable in the context of the meaning of village talk and conversation. The situation is one in which a child, following the example of adults, learns the appropriate verbal statements and responses but understands that much real communication occurs through tones of voice, bodily movements, and an estimate of the particular qualities of the particular event, rather than through words alone.

Talk in Vasilika, which literally aims at inducing direct action by others, also serves as a means of asserting a degree of equality in all human relationships. Just as children listen to, but need not accept, advice from parents, and parents receive comments and advice from their children that they may or may not accept, so people in higher prestige positions feel free to give advice and make suggestions to people in lower positions and vice versa. Social workers who occasionally visit the village have no hesitation in directly suggesting to a village woman that she take off her kerchief or that she have her teeth fixed. Conversely, the villagers do not hesitate to tell the social worker that she ought to eat more because she is too thin. Doctor and patient, waiter and customer, priest and parishioner, government official and taxpayer will, on some occasions, engage in the ritual of advice-giving. This pattern of relations cuts across the respect for expertness, for the skills of the specialist discussed in an earlier chapter. The right to a certain give-and-take underlies all relationships and serves to keep each situation unique and each relationship one of equality on at least some level. In agonistic situations, it is one means of reverting to an acceptance of common humanity.

Conversational skills are directly a part of the contests in two ways. First, skill in oratory and argument gives one an edge in the contests. The aim of the discussion usually is not to arrive at a rationally based conclusion or to exchange information, but to display skill at allusions, verbal quips, and niceties of expression. *Kuvenda* (conversation) provides men and women with an opportunity to boast of their own and their family's achievements and gives men a special opportunity to display their political knowledge and interest and to engage in political argument. Conversation of this kind has some of the quality of an arena in which each man displays himself as an individual and waits for an audience response. People talk at each other rather than with each other.

Second, talk enters into the agonistic relation when people try to elicit information from others by their questions and comments, and the others conceal as much as possible by their answers. If one gives a piece of news to another, and the receiver can say, "*To ematha*," "I have already learned that," the receiver says it with a touch of pride and has scored a small point. The news of a serious accident to a member of one family will be divulged to other related families; unrelated families may pick up the information, but frequently do not pass it on, partially to avoid giving the original family undue prominence. The villagers acquire skill in extracting information by indirect means. One of their

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methods is to ask the same questions in different ways at different times, and an outsider is often struck by the persistence with which such questioning on the same issue is carried on over many months. Not to succeed in gathering a choice bit of knowledge is no disgrace—the villagers keep trying and every man stays on the alert to guard his secrets.

There are some kinds of verbal communication that are outside the realm of agonistic relationships and in a sense provide a respite from them. These are the ritual phrases, which constitute proper responses to frequently recurring common life situations.

Village manners require the use of a wide variety of greetings at meeting and at parting. In addition to these, there are a large number of appropriate set phrases for life crisis situations, large and small. For example, one says *"Kali eleftberya,"* "Good deliverance," to a pregnant woman, "May they live for you" to a parent showing you a picture of his children, "May it pass for you" to an ill person or to any member of his family, "To your health" to a person wearing new clothes, and so on. "Many years" is the wish expressed to everyone on saints' days. This list is far from complete, but illustrates the point that although the phrases are formulaic and are most often used without conscious awareness of their literal meanings, they are apotropaic in feeling. In other words, the villagers have a vague sense that the phrases, which are good wishes, may succeed in warding off evil. Certainly the formulas also serve as an immediate expression of the good intentions of the speaker toward another in a potentially stressful situation.

Transmission of Values

Some of the weapons used in agonistic relationships in the village and some of the processes by which children acquire the necessary skills to use them have been considered. It remains to complete the discussion of the kinds of values and attitudes inculcated in children and to show the relationship of all the foregoing to the question: Who are the actors in the contests of Vasilika, and what are the social alignments which form the structural base of these human relationships in the village?

If, as we have seen, obedience to elders is not a virtue which parents stress to regulate the behavior of children, and if affection is interspersed with ridicule so that children cannot depend completely on the parents' support, by what mechanism do the villagers' children acquire the prevailing standards of behavior? It has already been suggested that the villagers act as if they believed that human beings, by virtue of their humanity, have brains. It may now be added that they also believe that inherent in every child is a sense of integrity which, in English, is best translated as shame. Parents do not feel that they have to implant these traits in their children but expect to bring them to the surface and to put to use qualities which the child already has within himself.[3] Each child is believed to have rudimentary intelligence which will develop into rational

[3] I am indebted to Popie Mohring for this phrasing.

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is not to admit one's own shortcomings, so a family will protect its members by overt support even when they engage in admittedly deviant behavior. An individual is told within the family circle that he is bringing disgrace on all its members, but he knows equally well that the family will protect him outside from as many of the consequences of his acts as possible. Families sacrifice much to send offending sons and daughters into other communities or to protect them in other ways. Children, in turn, speak well of their parents and tell of their accomplishments, even under circumstances in which the facts would not warrant such loyalty. The combat unit, for some occasions at least, is therefore the entire elementary family in its relationships with other families, and, indeed, with the rest of the world.

Congruent with this state of affairs is the fact that when the battle is not between families, the lines of antagonism are not drawn between age grades or sexes. The battle is not between the old and the young, or between men and women. It is rather old against other old, young against other young, men against other men, and women against other women.

Let us consider age groupings first. These are seen by the villagers roughly as pre-school children; school children up to twelve years old, at which time they have finished the elementary grades; adolescents, who are considered young until they marry; married adults; and finally elders, marked by the fact that their children are married. The divisions are not clearly defined and there is much overlapping, but to a certain extent each younger group treats the next older category of people with at least some of the deference with which all treat the elders; and each older group treats the next younger with some of the peremptoriness with which the elders are entitled to treat all others. Since the patterns of deference toward older men and the reciprocal nondeference are the standards for behavior among people of different social position, they shall be described here. Older men are always seated quickly and are not left standing under any circumstances. In the winter their seat is directly opposite the fireplace, while the women and children sit at right angles to the men. Older men are given the best chair the establishment affords; they are permitted to lean against the stalls in the front of the church while others usually may not do so. Young men do not smoke in front of their fathers; there is an avoidance of ribald conversation between the age groups. Older men in the village are addressed by courtesy titles such as *barba* (uncle) or, if considerably older than the speaker, as *papuli* (grandfather); and older men are always served first if there are no visitors present. Within the family, sons and daughters kiss the hands of their parents when they return after an absence. All children do this for respected elders who visit the village, while a large majority of the villagers on formal occasions greet the village priest in this fashion.

Elders in their relations with younger people address them by their given names and have the privilege of ordering them to run errands or to perform all kinds of small services. The tone in which older people order the younger is loud, often peremptory, and frequently is an exhortation to hurry. *"Gligbora!, gligbora!,"* "Fast!" said in a tone of command and dismissal, is perhaps the most telling expression of a superordinate person's relation to a subordinate. The

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 963 EH1 Greece EH1
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000 562 521 829 different from each other for that. In the farming life of the village, men and women work, for the most part, at different tasks inside the households and in the fields. Men go to the coffeehouses alone and talk politics among themselves, women do neither; men do not discuss politics with women. In 1956, at a time the men of the village were agitated over the Cyprus issue (as was the entire Greek nation), a woman announced to a group of other women one morning that the English had hanged two young terrorists on Cyprus. Only one other woman in the group of five knew what she meant, and one of the group had so little knowledge that she asked, "What is Cyprus?"

562 [834] [576] The strength of the conceptual differentiation of men and women in the village may be judged from the expectation that the women will give men the kind of deference the young give the old. Men assign to women, and women accept for themselves, some other attributes of the young: modesty; greater emotionality and sensibility and, therefore, a longer continuing struggle for self-control; less rationality; and a greater vulnerability, which necessitates assistance from their menfolk and from the supernatural.

Americans are struck by the separateness of the preoccupations and activi- [594] ties of men and women in Vasilika. Men and women meet only with respect to their joint family obligations—the responsibilities of procreation and of supporting their children. Among the villagers there is even an atmosphere of covert mutual dislike between the sexes. Men express contempt for what interests women and vice versa. The spheres of activity in which men and women support each other have to do with the honor of the family and constitute a division of labor based on sex but with a curiously sexless quality. There is no mutuality between the sexes in the village when the needs of masculinity or the needs of [577] femininity are involved. The women have little patience with, and may even fear, male extravagance in efforts to maintain *filotimo;* men have little patience with [828] emotional crises in females.

It is difficult to write of these characteristic attitudes without creating a distorted picture of women as an inferior sex and of males and females at war with each other. The male-centeredness of Greek village society is undeniable; but [834] neither are women wholly without rights. For example, the avoidance of places where men gather is a form of modesty, as I have suggested, and not an admission of inferiority. Women have their own conversational groups of working [594] neighbors which men do not join. In addition, the economic functions of the dowry and the residual control women maintain over it gives them considerable voice in the decisions made within the family.

562 593 Finally, the residual equality of a common humanity which appears in the reciprocal comments and suggestions between people in superordinate and subordinate positions—at least in the village—again mitigates the severity of the relationship betwen the sexes. Nor should we leave the subject without mention of the accommodation many couples make to their marriages or of the frequent development of mutual affection between husband and wife who find themselves compatible as individuals once they have worked together to raise a family. What I wish to explain here is that mutual respect and affection between a married couple can develop in Vasilika, but that in order for it to do so, the husband and

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623 responsibility. The collection of its monies is undertaken by the central government's financial officers directed from Amphiklia, and the expenditure of its monies is supervised and controlled by the officers of the *nomarchia* centered in Levadhia. Moreover, the council has neither responsibility nor power over other village-wide activities. Law enforcement and the operation of the village school and of the village churches are administered separately both from the council and each from the others. Before turning to these activities, some mention of the council's role in Vasilika apart from the formal expectations is appropriate.

[829] [622] It is indicative of the village attitude toward the council, in contrast with that toward the president, that at no time during our stay in the village was any man pointed out to us as having the status of council member or as having had it in the past. When, accompanied by several villagers, we visited the former schoolteacher of Vasilika, he asked us who was currently the president but did not ask about the council members. The president has an important role to play 622 in the minds of the villagers. He is expected to act as liaison between them and 829 other governmental units and to further the interests of Vasilika in whatever situations may develop. For example, there was some criticism of the president for not arranging more rapidly for the bus to come through the village. In 731 early April 1956, an unexpected and heavy rain flooded the fields and threatened 312 to destroy the wheat if the waters did not drain off quickly. Most of the vil- 208 lagers (not all, however) were agitated, and in the early morning groups of men 521 climbed the hill and looked out over the fields shaking their heads and lamenting, "*Katastrofes*!" "Catastrophy!" Then came the discussion of why the fields were not draining properly. All day, in the coffeehouse, the men inveighed against the English company which had owned the former Lake Copais land for setting up a drainage system that did not go beyond those lands; against the Greeks who took over the company for continuing a system that, the men insisted, not only did not drain the lands of Vasilika, but even made it subject to flooding; against the government for not having built a proposed dam that would have protected the region; and against the village president for not immediately calling on the nomarch's engineers to suggest remedies for the present situation. For days after, there were rumors that the nomarch's technical staff would meet with the president and councils of Parori and Vasilika to arrange a public works program of low dams to protect the area from possible future disasters from the same cause. The meeting never took place. Some villagers 731 blamed the situation on the unwillingness of the farmers to work together to 312 build their own small dams. One man had earlier tried to protect his own 208 fields by building low earthen dikes around them, but his work was wasted because the surrounding fields were not so protected. The morning after the storm some of the men had quickly built up a two-foot dam at an obviously vulnerable spot near the cemetery. But a villager pointed out that if the water had risen just a little further, the placement of the dam would have made the situation worse rather than better. There was no more rain; the waters gradually receded; each man watched for his own fields to dry out. Those who were left with one or two small plots that were so badly flooded as to be useless for

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959)1963 EH1 Greece EH1
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an individual's or family's *filotimo* would be considered severely damaged if they stole from a stranger to whom hospitality had been offered; in fact, such thefts are very rare in any Greek village. Within Vasilika itself, there was some petty filching now and then, but it did not occur on the scale one would have expected from the frequent references to theft and thieving in conversation.

The inhospitality of people in other places was a frequent topic of conversation at the homes of those celebrating name days. A man could always raise a laugh by describing the ludicrously meager food and drink provided at a wedding or name day celebration he had attended at another village. Usually in response to any questions about the occurrence in Vasilika of deviant behavior, or of some form of discord, or of some moral transgression, the villagers began by making a general statement of denial. Such things happened in other villages, they would say, but not in Vasilika.

It would seem from the foregoing that Vasilika's population did, indeed, identify itself with the village as an entity. Vasilika is their *patridha*, and it must be thought to have good qualities, I believe, because the village's qualities reflect on its inhabitants both in their status as individuals and as families. Pride in the village, then, may be an extension of pride in oneself or one's family, and the functional consequences for village-wide enterprises of the existence of such pride depend on the strength of the competing sources of satisfaction.

In Vasilika, since farms may be maintained by the labor of the elementary family with only periodic requirements for a larger labor force, since sons and daughters leave the village and yet maintain relationships with those still in Vasilika, and since individuals can expect to give and to receive protection from their families, the forces leading toward either independence or family solidarity would appear to be strong enough to leave little energy for village-centered activities as a method of augmenting self-esteem. Nevertheless, the village as an entity constitutes a permanent potential source of satisfaction for its inhabitants, and now and then, under certain circumstances, the village itself becomes the primary object of loyalty for its population and commands some sacrifice. The boundary dispute with Parori was such an occasion for Vasilika. Moreover, any individual can, if he wishes, use his energies when he occupies an official position to gain improvements for the village as a means of enhancing his own self-esteem and of gaining the respect of the villagers, as long as he does not do so at the expense of his own children. The people of Vasilika are entirely willing to enjoy and to speak proudly of the electricity, or the piped water, or the better roads in Vasilika, once they have obtained them, even if they are not always willing to work together to achieve the improvements.

But Vasilika, as a village, must compete with another focus of loyalty for its inhabitants besides the family: Greekness itself—and the Greek nation as a political entity. The villagers' awareness of and pride in their Greekness is profound. In 1956 when we were questioning the children as to what they wanted to be when they grew up, several boys answered that they hoped God would let them grow strong and sturdy so that they could be good soldiers and go to "Fight for Cyprus." Moreover, the villagers associate certain qualities with Greek ethnicity: the desire for political independence and the willingness

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

interior of the vehicle, there were others who had with less formality installed themselves amidst the multitudinous array of baggage, livestock and firearms which renders every Greek bus incapable of passing beneath what used, in England at least, to be described as 'a low bridge'. To the north of Drama the road crosses a dusty plain for several kilometres and then turns sharply to the right between two high peaks and winds laboriously up a rocky defile. Every few hundred yards there was a bridge: either guarded by a block-house, manned by men of the mobile section of the home-guard, or else lying in ruins and necessitating a perilous descent into a dried-up water course. These occasional outposts apart, we saw no human habitation for the best part of another twenty kilometres, when we reached the head of the pass. Here we halted for a few minutes and refreshed ourselves with cold mountain water from a stream by the roadside. Shortly after three o'clock we began the descent into the well-watered plateau, within sight of the Bulgarian frontier, on the northern fringe of which lies the village of Kato Nevrokopi, and which had been the scene of bitter fighting when the Germans poured into Greece in April, 1941. A few minutes later we were among the houses of Nevrokopi and my fellow-passengers pointed out to me the cottage, in no way distinguishable from its neighbours save by the board bearing the Byzantine eagles and the inscription *ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΥΡΟΚΟΠΙΟΥ* beside the door, which, *faute de mieux*, has served as the bishop's headquarters since 1945: the old metropolis having been destroyed during the Bulgarian occupation of eastern Macedonia.

Half-past three on a warm August afternoon not being a discreet hour at which to call on a Greek bishop, I retired to the green shade of a vine beside the *plateia* to sip coffee and discuss such varied topics as the Bishop of Birmingham, Schiller and the Scottish liturgy (and, inevitably, the incredible folly of the British electorate in banishing Mr. Churchill to the opposition benches), with the commanding officer of the gendarmerie and other local celebrities. Meanwhile, a troop of small boys was despatched at regular intervals to reconnoitre in the vicinity of the metropolis. At half-past four it was reported that the windows were open (all true Greeks sleep with windows and shutters firmly closed), and I was thereupon escorted to the metropolis where I was warmly welcomed by the Bishop. We talked until a little after six o'clock, when the *ephemerios*, or curate, of the parish arrived to lead the way to church for evensong.

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1

[Village Life]

perhaps, not be counted as full-time farmers. Indeed, when one realizes that according to this same census the average family farm contained only a little more than 8 acres, and the amount of productive land per head of the rural population totaled just 1.75 acres, it is obvious that there are very few full-time farmers in Greece, if the term is taken to mean persons who busy themselves on the land throughout the year.

Except for a few weeks, when especially intensive work of cultivation or harvesting must be done, Greek peasant farmers enjoy a great deal of leisure, and spend it, characteristically, sitting in the village *cafeneion*, or coffee house, talking, playing backgammon, or just watching the passing scene. A casual observer might mistake such idleness for laziness; yet when tangible gain is to be won by working hard, Greek peasants do not spare themselves. But in practically every village there are far more hands than are needed to do the work of the fields; and when the needful work has been done, sitting in a coffee house is more entertaining than sitting at home. There a man may hear the latest gossip of the village, read the Athens newspapers, talk politics, and watch the shadows shift across the village square as the day progresses.

The women, on the other hand, lead a much harder life. Household tasks and the care of children take up most of the hours of the day, and in the seasons when field work is heavy, women work side by side with the men. For a woman to sit in a coffee house would be the grossest breach of etiquette, something quite unthinkable. The village water fountain may serve as a place for daily gossip; but it is the church which really provides the village women with a meeting place where they may on a Sunday morning, after (or even during) the service, talk and enjoy a few minutes of leisure each week. By a curious and unspoken law, the men of the villages usually do not attend church, save on feast days and other special occasions. Thus

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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648 668 the summer of 1956. The opposition belabored the government for failing to free the Cypriotes; the government swore that no effort had been spared; and each side rivaled the other in denouncing the stubbornness of Britain, the meddling of Turkey and the indifference of the United States. Events in Cyprus, where nearly every day people were killed as a result of the guerrilla operations of an organization known by the initials EOKA (Ethniki Organosis Kypriakou Agonos, or National Organization of Cypriote Fighters), occupied the most prominent place in every newspaper, and speeches or statements about the Cyprus question filled an amazing proportion of the space that remained. Nothing else seemed to matter very much; and this attitude was not confined to newspapers. No conversation could long continue before the Cyprus question came up, and even very casual contacts between a Greek and an American were likely to produce an impassioned plea for Cyprus, together with reproaches against the United States government for failing to act in the matter.

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From the point of view of someone interested in confronting and trying to relieve the economic and social difficulties of contemporary Greece, the Cyprus question was bound to appear totally irrelevant. If the Cypriotes were accorded the right to determine their own form of government, and if, as seemed overwhelmingly probable, the majority of the island's inhabitants then elected to unite with Greece, nothing would be helped so far as Greece's own problems were concerned. Yet by 1956 the liberation of Cyprus had become the very stuff and substance of Greek political debate. A more effective red herring would be difficult to imagine.

From the point of view of the Greek public, however, the Cypriote cause was sacred, and far more worthy of attention than merely economic questions. This attitude was deeply rooted in the political tradition of the nation. Indeed, the whole

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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and then destroy the parliamentary machinery and civil liberty in favor of Communist dictatorship.

In 1956 these things were not apparent. Communism was not an issue; Cyprus had replaced it, and the Communist party had officially endorsed the Cyprus struggle over the radio. No one admitted to being a Communist, since to do so would have been a short way to jail. The people seemed quite genuinely glad to be relieved of the long preoccupation with the Communist question, and to find a cause upon which everyone could unite. This was, indeed, one of the reasons why Cyprus was such a heart-warming cause for the Greeks. Everyone, no matter what his opinions on domestic issues, was behind the Cypriotes. The Greeks had not known what it was to be united on an important public issue since the time of the Albanian war in 1940. Yet if Communists and nationalists were to quarrel in Cyprus, a possibility of which there were already some convincing signs in the summer of 1956, then the Communist question would emerge again in Greece with new bitterness, as each side sought to blame the other for the disruption of the Cypriote struggle.

In any analysis such as this it is easy to overemphasize the instability and insecurity of Greek political affairs. Certainly Greek politics are unstable, and the parliamentary regime in Greece is insecure. But it is well to remember that these conditions are not new. Exactly the same could be said of the political scene at any time since 1909, when the current phase of modern Greek political life began. The Greeks have learned to live with such conditions, and even manage to derive lively exhilaration from the perpetual uncertainty of their politics. Without politics, what would there be to talk about in the cafés?

The things that are new in Greek public life attract little public attention. The man in the street and in the village coffee

7:Friedl E-5 (1955-1956)1958
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Boeotia

in characteristically Greek fashion, more human-centered than science-centered. They went along with the human necessities of the patients, allowing these necessities to overshadow, for a time at least, what they regarded as the strict requirements of scientific hospital management.

Moreover, conversations with the doctors indicated that, although they were far more sophisticated than their village patients, they were nevertheless participants in the same basic culture, and shared many attitudes and expectations with their patients. For example, the lack of regular time scheduling for consultation, rounds of the wards, nursing routines, and the like, is not likely to be as personally irritating to a Greek doctor as it might be to his American counterpart. Greeks actively dislike regularity, and, unlike many Americans, do not derive comfort and security from routines. The Greek doctors are also less likely to be disturbed by the presence of the large numbers of visitors and their, to Americans, relatively boisterous conversations. Long and animated consultations before any decisions are made form a part of Greek life to a greater or lesser degree at all social levels, and conversation for its own sake is a favorite recreation. The fact is that illness and quiet are not inextricably linked concepts in Greek culture.

What the Greek doctors are apparently unaware of, however, is the extent to which their, to them, makeshift hospital practices conform to the social scientists' recent recommendations for flexibility and for adaptation to traditional methods of handling illness. What careful analysis has pointed out as a desirable method for conscious, planned, and gradual change,

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people. This policy of the government has created more problems for the future generations to solve than confront the people at the present. The whole family concentrates its attention on wheat raising since its market and price are definitely fixed. The harvest rush seasons has made obligatory the work of women and children. Even younger children share the burden by either bringing drinking water, caring for the infants of the family or by collecting the fallen wheat heads. It is hard to give the age at which children are expected to do their share. It all depends on how important the need of the children are.

243 [654] [435] 857 243 464

Work of Wives.

Throughout the ages we find that women, besides doing the household work and raising children, share in the farm work. The women of Megali Vrisi more than any other women in the civilized world have become the real beasts of burden of village life. They have to get up early in the morning, prepare breakfast and prepare food for the whole day. As a matter of fact it is an accepted principle that women are selected as to their ability for working hard, bearing children, working at the loom and having the lips closed. These are the outstanding /16/ qualities that every woman is expected to have. Women in discussing or in gossiping about girls express their opinion as the outstanding quality of a girl, how tight her lips are, and the amount of time she spends at the loom. It is up to the parents to look up a girl for their son either within the village or from the neighboring villages. The son has to consent to what parents decide in this matter. In many instances it happens that the young man meets his wife for the first time on his wedding day. There are many reasons that usually lead the parents to decide for the marriage of their son.

562 [462] [581] [521] [584] 562 581 596

a. Need for extra labor in the fields and at home.
b. Desire of the father and mother to have grandchildren so they can train them before they are too old.
c. The desire of the parents to have someone in the house to take care of them.

/21 cont./ The 443 437 433
one crop farming in most cases develops many economic and social difficulties. The peddlers of finished goods in the villages absorb a large part of the trade. Usually in exchange for their goods they get live poultry and eggs.

The biological function. The morals are very strict in the 834 village. In the grammar school the children are /22/ together [872] but after the age of 15 one seldom finds boys and girls playing together. Only the close relatives have an approved right to dance [602] with a girl or walk with her to the market. The boys get married 582 at from 18-25 and the girls from 15 to 20 years of age. The period 883 from 15 to 20 is spent by the girl in preparing her dowry. She is 583 busy at the loom or in embroidery with the needle and thread. 286 One of the desired qualities of the girl is to have her handmade 294 stuff. The ultimate aim of the marriage is to have children. If it [581] happens that she cannot have a child the first year of her married 842 life then gossip will start in the village of her inability to bear a child. Just the way a farmer thinks about a cow not calving, so do [521] the relatives and especially the father and mother-in-law. There is no limit as to the number of the children, as long as both husband and wife are healthy. The usual belief and excuse is, "God gave them and He will take care of them." Both young men [867] and the young women are instructed as to their duties as fathers and mothers. Birth control has no place here. Nature takes care of it. The strongest of the children survive under the conditions that are available for living. Besides, to use any method of preventing birth to a child is thought to be an immoral act. Thus [165] out of seven to eight children in a family about five survive up to the age of six and the rest /23/ die before then.

Size of families. The size of families varies in Megali Vrisi. 596 One finds the largest numbers among Caucasians and the smallest among Thracians. The Caucasians used to live in compound [178] families and still they stick to this idea even though it was broken down due to the new method of distribution of land. Even today one finds as large as 25 members in the family and as low as 3 members in the family. The compound family makes farming [241]

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At times of great calamities the tempo and the variety of songs increase which are rather of a mournful type. Every one who has lost his closest friend, a son, a relative, her admirer expresses their saddest grief in song which is made by each person with a touching tune. When somebody mourns in the village usually the light gay type of music disappears for sometime and the village bans dances. All share alike in the grief of their neighbor, and even if there was a marriage, it would be postponed due to the general approval of the villagers for the sake of the mourning period.

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Reading. Megali Vrisi does more reading than any other village in the neighborhood. This is perhaps due to the influence of the priest-teacher whose life has become a part of his villagers in educating them. He served his villagers for 37 years as teacher and priest, still continuing as a priest. His main purpose for teaching his people to read and write was to make them able to read and understand the universe about them. He had his own personal library and out of it loaned books /40/ to bright farmers so that they could read them to the others. His plan in giving lectures to the farmers on certain scientific topics created among the farmers an interest in reading and discovering. The books that interested them most were biographies, histories, geography, politics and inventions. None were interested in fiction or romance.

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The younger children had more zest in reading than the older people, but there were not enough books. I often found young men, at night sitting in groups of 6 to 10 to read the whole book with a kerosene lamp light so that others might have the chance to read it too. Reading among women is done less due to the nature of their work. They arekept busy from sunrise till late at night. Another important phase of the reading is the daily newspaper at the coffee house. Everybody once or twice a day drops in at the coffee house to read the newspaper. Discussions as to its news and editorial comments are conducted between groups of different political beliefs.

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4. The spirit of benevolence reaches its zenith. Donations to the church and to the poor.
5. Exchange of ideas with other villagers and thus benefit from each other's experience.
6. It is a day when everybody feels alike with no class distinction.

How local services are paid. There are three coffee houses in the village and they all work on a credit system to be collected in the summer. During the harvest season it is surprising to find more outside people with sacks and scales who come around to collect the debts than farmers. 452 [275]

/99/ The horseshoer, the herdsman, the barber, the priest, the school-committee, the tailor, the local hospital committee, the coffee house men, the local grocery merchant, the town merchants, the blacksmith, the tin man, the carpenter, the doctor, the drug man, the mid-wife, the guard of the fields, the vegetable man, the wagon builder, the cheese man and the tax collector. Usually at the harvest season the coffee houses are filled with collectors. They get information from each other to the quality of wheat collected from different farmers. Most of the agreements are based on an amount of wheat and not on money as a basis. For example, the barber for hair cutting and shaving gets 12 okes of wheat (33.60 lbs) for one year. The herdsman charges 3 okes of wheat per head for the year. The doctor gets 10 okes of wheat per family for the year. It is surprising here to find how much of the business transaction are carried out on commodity bases rather than with money. [463] [275] 452 436 465 437

Cast of Personalities. In the social interaction which takes place in a community, certain personalities emerge which develop into the community's cast of actors. These are the people who provide the /100/ foci of attention, about whom gossip circulates more than others, and who give to the community its really human qualities. Among these characters are both the heroes and the villains. They are outstanding, however, not so much because 156 554 [521].

each fact wrapped in some subjective, protective covering. The fact is true and dependable, but it should not be naked. A memorandum of fact by a Greek is full of such phrases as: "Then the nobleness of the Greek soul was revealed," or "The Greek peasant modestly died . . . to protect his beloved country, but his death was one of the noblest sacrifices to the idea of liberty." Or, if Greeks have to criticize, they do it with oratory also, reviling passionately, as when a mother scolds a loved one with fury but not with cold and calculating anger.

The covering of the naked fact is essential to the integrity—the absence of all molestation—of the *philotimo*. The inner core of the Greek must never be exposed; and *entrope*, the Greek word for shame, modesty, decency, propriety, self-consciousness, embarrassment, means: "turning inward." This is a concept both positive and negative: you have done something shameful only because you have failed in the positive aspect, in modesty and decency. Out of *entrope*, a Greek avoids saying things and doing things which would reflect on the *philotimo* of himself, his family, his country. For example, the self-made man in Greece does not boast of his rags-to-riches progress. This would expose the poverty of his village, the inability of his family to help him, the fact that his uncle or his godfather could not or did not do his duty by him; it would expose much that should remain decently covered, and would further prove him to be lacking in *philotimo*.

The Greek *philotimo* should not be confused either with the notion of face or with that of pride. Pride for the Greeks carries with it the connotation of arrogance: "the proud bird is caught by the nose". A Greek mother is not proud of her son: she is honoured by him; the *philotimo* is enhanced through honour, not pride. There is something of the notion of face, in that it is insupportable to have one's failures and needs known. But there is more than this; what is really bad is that you yourself should expose your failure or yourself. And you have no *philotimo* if you avoid going to fight for your country, whether anyone knows this or not.

The essence of *philotimo* is inviolability and freedom. The first means that a Greek is very "touchy". In a very popular work of the thirties, which gives a humorous report of the cases in the Court of Petty Offences, a large proportion of the cases arise out of this molestation of the *philotimo*. The reaction is immediate, either in scathing invective, such as name-calling, or as physical attack. Offence against one's *philotimo* brings retaliation, not self-reproach. There are suicides in Athens for financial reasons, or for love, but none are reported as a result of a molested *philotimo*.

Freedom is the positive aspect of this. Greeks say: "To be a Greek means to be free," and "Nothing is beautiful unless you are free, not even the flowers in the spring."[1] It gave the Greeks a great sense of

[1] Joanne Lee Schriver, 1947.

of them. Like the eyes, they lead astray not through making false promises, but by engendering love. Speech is of extreme importance to the Greeks, since it establishes and fosters the all-important personal relationships. Almost everyone creates songs; love songs at the village festival, dirges, lullabies, songs of the way of life, songs of work, songs of one's village and of nature. It is important to find the graphic word in the most ordinary speech, and to turn a spicy phrase. Utterance will take the form of a small oration without creating self-consciousness; an answer is often incisive repartee. There are orations in the coffee house, and wherever a few people gather together. Even learned papers or scientific journals, when not under foreign influence, are often couched in oratory. *Couvenda*, conversation, is a recognized form of "passing the time", of entertainment, perhaps on a par with *syryani*. *Couvenda* is rarely desultory, or the mere exchange of information. It is usually contrapuntal virtuosity, incisive, combative, loud; and loudness is such a familiar quality of conversation that radios are turned on much too loud for the ears of foreigners. A statement or a question is countered by a challenging question. Tact and gentleness have no part here, insults are hurled, attacks are made, within the appropriate limits. A discussion is a battle of personal opinion, and its end is neither to reach the truth nor to reach a conclusion; its end is sheer enjoyment of vigorous speech.

The hair is a focus of erotic attraction. In the folk songs there is often the picture of a girl letting her hair down as a ladder hung for her lover. For the man, the moustache is a symbol of his manhood and attractiveness. The beard is not important, and in a folk song, a priest's wife calls her husband a bearded goat. A man without face hair is called a *Spanos*, and is a figure of derision in the folklore, and sometimes of fear.

Beyond the features of the head, very little of the body is mentioned in the personal folk songs. Genital organs must never be mentioned, and many women know no names for them. Out of over 400 love couplets analysed, only one mentions the breast, "your breast is like Paradise". Formally, as a general division of the body—the chest—the breast is named in the same way for men and women and the term can be used freely. In its form of a female breast it must not be mentioned, as none of the sexual areas are mentioned. Its functional term, however, the nursing-breast, *vyzi*, is commonly used without embarrassment and when a mother is nursing, there is no embarrassment about exposing the breast for suckling.

The sense of smell is extremely important to the Greeks. In the personal folk poems, there is much mention of sweet-smelling flowers, herbs, trees: "musk and cinnamon, a beautiful girl she is" says a rhyming game. An unexpected guest will be offered a "smell" of whatever the housewife is cooking, or the family is eating. And it

10: Lee E,I-4,5 (no date) 1953
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THE FAMILY UNIT AND ITS EXTENSIONS

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I do not envy others for their vineyards and their gardens,
I envy only those who can stay in one place
And most I envy those who have brothers and first cousins
To grieve with them and rejoice with them
And to help each other when anything befalls.
(Cretan folksong)

Greek society starts with the family, and is patterned on it. It extends outward from it. A child is born into a group and remains part of the group through no effort of its own, through no attempt to please. Work and play, eating, conversation, celebration, are all in terms of this unit, and are the way in which belongingness is taken on and reaffirmed. Wider contacts come through the family and its extensions. A child's friends are the family friends and their children, and the relatives. He goes visiting and to social gatherings with the family, 594 by day or by night, though pediatricians protest against the latter [855] practice. He goes to church with the family, attending the regular [852] liturgy, not a Sunday school for children. Even when great religious [946] ceremonial occasions come late at night, such as the Mass of the Epitaph on Good Friday night, and the Mass of the Rising of Christ at midnight, the children are present. Except where foreign customs [527] have been taken over, a Greek child does not celebrate his birthday. [977] What is celebrated is the day of the saint after whom the child is named, and it is his family who celebrate. Old and young come to congratulate the family, and to wish that it shall enjoy the child for many years. The family, containing the child, is the focus, not the child himself.

The Greek family is family-oriented. It makes room for the child, 594 and the mother expects to spend much time nursing the child, expects 855 her cooking to be slowed down because of the constant presence and participation of the child. On the other hand, the child is not the focus, and the rhythm of activities does not change with the coming of the child. There are no special mealtimes for the child, neither are [264] the family mealtimes shifted to accommodate its needs. If the father [527] leaves the fields or closes his store on the child's nameday, it is because the *family* is celebrating. The child in the family is neither outstanding nor disruptive; but he is important, since he is accorded a definite place within the structured family.

In a Greek family the members spend much time together. The 594 children learn to enjoy being with the adults, and to listen to their [521] conversation, which is not trimmed down to meet the children's interests. In the village, a house often consists of only one room, [342] so there is no physical privacy; and even when there are more rooms for summer living, the winter room is one. And shared living is [156] prized. There is no craving for aloneness, although aloneness is

Not all the older peasants attended school as children, or attended it for more than three or four years; and often what literacy they did have was lost in the course of time, because they had no opportunity to use it. There are no libraries in the villages or in most of the provincial centres. There is also no pattern of reading the Bible, which has maintained reading knowledge in other lands. In Greece the translation of the Bible into modern Greek was forbidden until recent years. The men, however, do read the newspapers with care, when they find them, and they have a detailed knowledge and a private opinion on international and national events and policies; politics, well understood, forms the basis of most discussions, in village or city. The satire on the Court of Petty Offences reports a case where two simple workers on the bus, engrossed in a discussion of the Spanish Civil War, use the perspiring back of another passenger as the map of Spain upon which to follow the manoeuvres of the two armies. The incident is amusing, but not surprising to Greek readers. A book on nutrition urges housewives to pattern their planning on the principles of the British monarchy, not those of the Italian monarchy, assuming knowledge of the principles underlying the difference.

In the cities, there is much intellectual activity on a high level. Many people write articles or poems or stories for their own satisfaction in their leisure time. Conversation presupposes wide reading. The inexpensive paper-bound volumes of Greek works, as well as of translations of foreign works, old and contemporary, make such reading possible. There are 10 daily papers in Athens, and a number of magazines catering to literary tastes, or addressed to simpler people. Magazines carry reports of new scientific developments throughout the world, and a number of educational articles. Those addressed to the *cosmakis*, the simple people, carry articles on child and maternal care, have cooking and sewing hints, as well as columns of personal advice. The newspapers maintain a high literacy and scholarly standard.

RELIGION

Religion and the Church are almost synonymous for the Greeks; and the Greek Orthodox religion is entirely synonymous with Greekness. When the Greek says: "Is he a Christian?" he means "Is he a Greek?" The Greek Church is the main factor in Greek continuity among emigrants nowadays. Throughout the past centuries, the Church has maintained Greek consciousness in many communities in Asia Minor, where the people spoke Turkish as a mother tongue and followed Turkish customs. The few Protestant Greeks occupy an ambiguous position and find it difficult to explain that they are really Greek since they do not conform to the tradition of Greek